

In the Claims

1-21 (Cancelled)

22. (New) A guide wire comprising:

an elongate core, wherein a distal portion of the elongate core has a first flexibility, an intermediate portion of the elongate core has a second flexibility and a proximal portion of the elongate core has a third flexibility, wherein the intermediate portion is proximal the distal portion and the proximal portion is proximal the intermediate portion; and

wherein the first flexibility is greater than the second flexibility; and

an outer surface, wherein a distal portion of the outer surface has a first coefficient of friction, an intermediate portion of the outer surface has a second coefficient of friction, and a proximal portion of the outer surface has a third coefficient of friction, wherein the intermediate portion is proximal the distal portion and the proximal portion is proximal the intermediate portion; and

wherein the first coefficient of friction is lower than the second coefficient of friction.

23. (New) The guide wire in claim 22, wherein the third flexibility is lower than the second flexibility.

24. (New) The guide wire in claim 22, wherein the flexibility is varied between portions of the elongate core by varying the diameter of the elongate core.

25. (New) The guide wire in claim 22, wherein the third coefficient of friction is higher than the second coefficient of friction.

26. (New) The guide wire in claim 22, wherein the coefficient of friction is varied between portions of the guide wire outer surface by varying the level of hydrophilicity of the guide wire outer surface.

27. (New) The guide wire in claim 22, wherein a distal tip of the guide wire is radiopaque.

28. (New) The guide wire in claim 22, wherein the distal portion of the elongate core and the distal portion of the outer surface of the guide wire are co-extensive, the intermediate portion of the elongate core and the intermediate portion of the outer surface of the guide wire are co-extensive, and the proximal portion of the elongate core and the proximal portion of the outer surface of the guide wire are co-extensive.

29. (New) A guide wire comprising:
an elongate core, wherein a distal portion of the elongate core has a first flexibility, an intermediate portion of the elongate core has a second flexibility and a proximal portion of the elongate core has a third flexibility, wherein the intermediate portion is proximal the distal portion and the proximal portion is proximal the intermediate portion; and
wherein the first flexibility is greater than the second flexibility;
an outer surface of the guide wire; and

a coating on a distal portion of the outer surface having a first coefficient of friction, a coating on an intermediate portion of the outer surface having a second coefficient of friction, and a coating on a proximal portion of the surface having a third coefficient of friction, wherein the intermediate portion is proximal the distal portion and the proximal portion is proximal the intermediate portion; and

wherein the first coefficient of friction is lower than the second coefficient of friction.

30. (New) The guide wire in claim 29, wherein the third flexibility is lower than the second flexibility.

31. (New) The guide wire in claim 29, wherein the flexibility is varied between portions of the elongate core by varying the diameter of the elongate core.

32. (New) The guide wire in claim 29, wherein the third coefficient of friction is higher than the second coefficient of friction.

33. (New) The guide wire in claim 29, wherein the coefficient of friction is varied between portions of the guide wire outer surface by varying the level of hydrophilicity of the guide wire outer surface.

34. (New) The guide wire in claim 29, wherein a distal tip of the guide wire is radiopaque.

35. (New) The guide wire in claim 29, wherein the distal portion of the elongate core and the distal portion of the outer surface of the guide wire are co-extensive, the intermediate portion of the elongate core and the intermediate portion of the outer surface of the guide wire are co-extensive, and the proximal portion of the elongate core and the proximal portion of the outer surface of the guide wire are co-extensive.

36. (New) A guide wire comprising:

- an elongate core, wherein a distal portion of the elongate core has a first flexibility, an intermediate portion of the elongate core has a second flexibility and a proximal portion of the elongate core has a third flexibility, wherein the intermediate portion is proximal the distal portion and the proximal portion is proximal the intermediate portion; and
- wherein the first flexibility is greater than the second flexibility;
- a reinforcement structure attached along at least a portion of the guide wire;
- an outer surface of the guide wire; and
- a coating on the distal portion of the surface having a first coefficient of friction, a coating on the intermediate portion of the surface having a second coefficient of friction, and a coating on the proximal portion of the surface having a third coefficient of friction, wherein the intermediate portion is proximal the distal portion and the proximal portion is proximal the intermediate portion; and
- wherein the first coefficient of friction is lower than the second coefficient of friction.

37. (New) The guide wire in claim 36, wherein the third flexibility is lower than the second flexibility.

38. (New) The guide wire in claim 36, wherein the flexibility is varied between portions of the elongate core by varying the diameter of the elongate core.

39. (New) The guide wire in claim 36, wherein the third coefficient of friction is higher than the second coefficient of friction.

40. (New) The guide wire in claim 36, wherein the coefficient of friction is varied between portions of the guide wire outer surface by varying the level of hydrophilicity of the guide wire outer surface.

41. (New) The guide wire in claim 36, wherein a distal tip of the guide wire is radiopaque.

42. (New) The guide wire in claim 36, wherein the distal portion of the elongate core and the distal portion of the outer surface of the guide wire are co-extensive, the intermediate portion of the elongate core and the intermediate portion of the outer surface of the guide wire are co-extensive, and the proximal portion of the elongate core and the proximal portion of the outer surface of the guide wire are co-extensive.

43. (New) The guide wire in claim 36, wherein the reinforcement member comprises a coil and the coil is wrapped around the elongate core.

44. (New) The guide wire in claim 43, wherein the coil is wrapped around the intermediate portion of the elongate core.

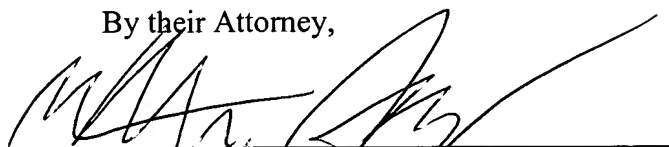
Respectfully submitted,

RICHARD G. CORNELIUS ET AL.

By their Attorney,

Date:

Oct. 29, 2003

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'G. M. Seager', is written over a horizontal line.

Glenn M. Seager, Reg. No. 36,926

Customer No. 28075

CROMPTON, SEAGER & TUFTE, LLC

1221 Nicollet Avenue, Suite 800

Minneapolis, Minnesota 55403-2420

Tel: (612) 677-9050

Fax: (612) 359-9349